

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESSB 5714

As Passed Senate, February 13, 2008

Title: An act relating to instruction in Spanish and Chinese languages.

Brief Description: Creating a pilot program of Spanish and Chinese language instruction.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education (originally sponsored by Senators Roach, Prentice, Rasmussen, Oemig, Clements, Rockefeller, Tom, Fairley, Hobbs, Shin, Swecker, Holmquist, Benton, Stevens, Parlette, Delvin and Kline).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Early Learning & K-12 Education: 2/26/2007, 2/26/07 [DPS-WM].

Ways & Means: 3/01/07, 3/05/07 [DPS(EDU), w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 3/09/07, 48-0.

Passed Senate: 2/13/08, 48-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EARLY LEARNING & K-12 EDUCATION

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5714 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators McAuliffe, Chair; Tom, Vice Chair; Holmquist, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Clements, Hobbs, Kauffman, Oemig, Rasmussen and Weinstein.

Staff: Susan Mielke (786-7422)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5714 as recommended by Committee on Early Learning & K-12 Education be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Prentice, Chair; Fraser, Vice Chair, Capital Budget Chair; Zarelli, Ranking Minority Member; Brandland, Carrell, Fairley, Hatfield, Hewitt, Hobbs, Honeyford, Keiser, Kohl-Welles, Oemig, Parlette, Rasmussen, Roach, Rockefeller, Schoesler and Tom.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Pridemore, Vice Chair, Operating Budget.

Staff: Bryon Moore (786-7726)

Background: Currently, there is no requirement for school districts to provide instruction in languages other than English in elementary schools. Under the State Board of Education graduation requirements, high school students must have at least five and one-half elective

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credits to graduate. The study of a world language other than English or the study of a world culture may satisfy any or all of the elective requirements.

In order to enter a public four-year college or university in Washington, a student must have at least two years of a single foreign language. Native American languages and American Sign Language will satisfy these requirements.

Summary of Engrossed Substitute Bill: A pilot program for up to two school districts to provide, sequentially, articulated Spanish and Chinese language instruction in elementary schools is created. A timeline is provided for applying for and awarding the pilots. Participating school districts may use current law to employ people of unusual competence, but without teacher certification, to provide the language instruction under the general supervision of a certificated staff person. The Superintendent of Public Instruction must provide an annual report for the life of the program, including whether the pilot should be continued, expanded, or modified. The act expires in July 2010.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect immediately.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Part of a world class education involves learning world languages. It is easier to learn another language when you are younger. We already have a large population of Spanish speakers in our country and state so it makes sense to teach Spanish to English-speaking children. I visited China and saw how Chinese was taught to English-speaking children. Students who learn a second language do better on the WASL.

OTHER: The bill permits individuals who do not have a teaching certificate to provide the language instruction. If these are credit-bearing courses then the teacher needs to have a teaching certificate. We need to ensure that the individuals have sufficient capabilities to provide the instruction and they need to be supervised by certificated staff.

Persons Testifying (Early Learning & K-12 Education): PRO: Senator Roach, prime sponsor.

OTHER: Nasue Nishida, Professional Educator Standard Board; Isabelle Munez-Colon, OSPI.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Substitute Bill (Ways & Means): PRO: For students to compete in the 21st century, they need a different kind of education than in past, and one component of that education includes world language instruction. Research indicates that developing language proficiency is easier at earlier grades. This is why the bill is designed to provide sequential world language instruction from elementary to high school. Any concerns about who will be providing the instruction have been alleviated by the substitute bill.

OTHER: The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) expressed some concern about the emphasis on volunteers providing the instruction. After working with the prime sponsor to look at the language of the substitute, OSPI changed from con to pro.

Persons Testifying (Ways & Means): PRO: Senator Roach, prime sponsor; Jennifer Priddy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

OTHER: Jennifer Priddy, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.